



FOR RELEASE
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Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Elder receives literacy award for revitalizing Hän language

DAWSON CITY—Education Minister Scott Kent will present Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Elder and community educator Doris Roberts with the Council of the Federation Literacy Award today, the day before the United Nations International Literacy Day.

"Ms. Roberts' efforts to re-learn, recover and teach the Hän language over the years are admirable," Kent said. "Because of her commitment to her language and culture, future generations will be able to connect to the history and traditions of her people."

The Council of the Federation Literacy Award is presented annually to one literacy leader in each province and territory. Announced this year in July, the award celebrates outstanding achievement, innovative practice and excellence in literacy.

Upon returning to her family after residential school, Roberts worked hard to re-learn the language she had been forbidden to speak and then teach it to others. She played a pivotal role in recovering Hän language and songs entrusted to the Tanacross of Alaska and, as a result, her teaching now includes stories, songs and performances that the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in were missing for 100 years.

"I'd like to thank the people who nominated me for the award," Roberts said. "I appreciate it very much and am proud to represent the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in. This was unexpected, but I'm very proud."

Minister Kent is presenting the award on behalf of Premier Darrell Pasloski, who represents Yukon in the Council of the Federation, which comprises all of Canada's premiers.

Previous Council of the Federation Literacy Award winners in Yukon include Claire Derome, Eleanor Millard, Emma Sam, Gordon Hardie, Patty Wiseman, Rock Brisson and George Green.

A complete list of recipients of the 2012 Council of the Federation Literacy Award and more information about the awards is on the Council of the Federation website at www.councilofthefederation.ca.

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Contact:

Elaine Schiman
Cabinet Communications
867-633-7961
elaine.schiman@gov.yk.ca

Chris Madden
Communications, Education
867-456-6789
chris.madden@gov.yk.ca